

SUBJECT: Engine Idling Policy

DATE: September 26, 2007

DISTRIBUTION: All General Services Department Employees

BY: Robert R. LeBreux, Fleet Manager

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chip Chesley, General Services Director

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance concerning the idling of internal combustion engines in General Services Department vehicles.

II. POLICY

It shall be the policy of the General Services Department to manage and operate its fleet of motor vehicles in a manner that conserves energy and minimizes emissions.

III. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all General Services Department employees.

IV. RESPONSIBILITY

It shall be the responsibility of all General Services Department employees to comply with the procedures set forth in this policy.

V. PROCEDURE

- A. Engine idling is to be kept to the absolute minimum amount necessary.
- B. Engines are not to be idled simply to “warm up” or pre-heat the cab.
- C. On vehicles equipped with air conditioning, engines are not to be idled in order to “pre-cool” the cab.

- D. Engines should never be allowed to idle while refueling the vehicle. This not only wastes fuel but is both dangerous and illegal.
- E. Whenever feasible, vehicle operators will try to live by the **“10 second rule”**. Simply stated, this means turning off the engine whenever it is anticipated that the engine will be needlessly idling for 10 seconds or more.

## VI. EXEMPTIONS

Exemptions from this policy are permitted when any of the following conditions exist:

- A. While in the process of performing daily pre-trip inspections.
- B. If it necessary to build up air pressure on vehicles equipped with air brakes.
- C. During cold weather and on a cold start, the engine may be idled for up to 3 minutes. The “high idle” feature (if so equipped) may be used to speed the warm up process.
- D. When clearing (or trying to keep clear) the vehicle’s windows of snow, ice, frost, fog, etc.
- E. When using the vehicle’s engine for “Power Take Off” (PTO) operation.
- F. When the vehicle’s battery(s) would likely become discharged due to high electrical demand, such as when operating emergency lights, strobe lights, radios, etc.
- G. When the engine is being run by a mechanic during the course of diagnostic procedures and/or repairs; also when a vehicle is being used to assist another vehicle or piece of equipment in the starting process.
- H. When a motor vehicle is forced to remain motionless because of traffic conditions.
- I. In those instances where the cab of the vehicle also serves as the de facto office of the person assigned to that vehicle, the Department/Division Head may authorize vehicle idling to the extent necessary for climate control during those periods of “office” type work.
- J. When a heavy-duty diesel engine has just been producing maximum or near maximum power, it may be “cooled down” by idling it for up to 3 minutes before shutting it down.